



## MATERIALS SELECTION COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

### Purpose

The Library Board of the Washington County Library System supports the Constitutional First Amendment rights of all citizens; recognizing the widely diverse interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, needs, and values within our citizenry. The purpose of the Materials Selection Collection Development Policy is to guide the library staff, under the general supervision of the Director, in the selection of library materials; to further public understanding as to the principles upon which selection is based; and to support the Library's mission and goals.

### Policy

#### I. Authority

Library materials selection is and shall be vested in the Library Director. In accordance with Utah Code Annotated §9-7-504 as amended any library material so selected shall be held to be selected by the board as they have those powers and duties as prescribed by county ordinance, including establishing policies for collections and information resources that are consistent with state and federal law.

#### II. Library Materials Definition

"Library materials" include, but are not limited to print, audio visual, and electronic formats.

#### III. Materials Selection Criteria

The library does not sanction or support any particular belief or views, nor is the selection of any given book equivalent to an endorsement of the viewpoint of the author expressed therein. Popular and literary works are chosen for varying levels of enjoyment, education, reading levels, age level interests, as well as differing social and religious customs. Selection will be made on the basis of whether or not an item presents a perspective of life that is needed to balance the collection and the literary merit of the work. The collection offers varying points of view and subjects in a variety of formats.

Selection of library materials is made on the basis of interest, informational content, popularity, and relevance to and for all residents of Washington County. The guidelines and criteria used in considering and selecting materials include but are not limited to:

Budget

Space availability for housing the material

Significance and value to the collection

Quality of format

Technical quality of non-print format

Price of the material

Availability of material in other libraries or through inter-library loan

Professional and general media reviews

Anticipated popularity and patron demand

Suitability of subject and style for intended audience  
Qualifications of authors or producers  
Authority of the work for the subject and other available resources

Consideration of a work for selection is given to the work as a whole. Materials may meet any or all of the criteria above. Materials are not excluded solely on any one or all of the following:

Race  
Religion  
Nationality  
Sex  
Sexual preference  
Language or profanity  
Political views of an author  
Controversial nature of an item, including cover art  
Endorsement or criticism of an item by any individual or group  
The possibility that materials may inadvertently come into the possession of a child

The general selection criteria listed above also apply to electronic formats. The following criteria are considered as well:

Compatibility with library and available public hardware and equipment  
Ease of use  
Searching capabilities  
Frequency of updates  
Remote, at-home-use capability  
Authority  
Design  
Whether or not the work is suitable for a public setting in regards to licensing and multiple users  
Electronic vs. print pricing and the availability of these two options

Library materials are purchased in a wide variety of formats to meet both expressed and anticipated needs and interests of the community. Best Sellers and popular titles are purchased in multiple copies as determined by popular demand and budget availability. Although the library attempts to provide material on every subject and reading level no attempt is made to match the collection to a particular curriculum. However, textbooks may be selected when they are the best or only source of information on a particular subject although not solely because a textbook is assigned as school curriculum. Space limitation and budgetary prioritization may preclude the library from duplicating any specialized or comprehensive collection that exist elsewhere in the community or is available through inter-library loan.

The Library Board of Directors and the Library Director do not endorse every idea or presentation contained in the materials the library makes available to the public. Every attempt is made to present a collection that is in the best interest of the public; maintaining a balanced collection representing diverse points of view on a number of subjects rather than the political, moral, or aesthetic values of those in positions of authority and responsibility. A balanced collection is one that reflects a diversity of materials rather than equality of numbers on the topics and subjects represented in the collection.

#### IV. **Collection Development & Maintenance**

The collection is continually evaluated by established processes for quality, relevancy, gaps, and acquisition needs. The library continues an ongoing schedule of adding materials as well as a

schedule of withdrawing or replacing worn or outdated materials. The collection is not intended to be archival in nature. Worn, damaged, and outdated materials as well as unnecessary duplicate copies are weeded from the collection on a regular and limited basis. Due to space limitations materials may also be withdrawn if they are not used or are superseded by a new edition or more authoritative work on a subject. Items may also be deleted if a more desirable format for the content has been added to the collection. Items which are deleted from the collection are clearly marked and made available for sale to the public.

V. **Access**

Each individual has the right to choose which library materials they will access. However no individual or group has the right to restrict the freedom of others to read or view whatever they select. No book or other material in question is automatically removed from the collection because of individual objections.

The library does not assume the role of the parent; instead parents are encouraged to be involved in the lives of their children and their use of the library and to guide their children in the selection of library materials supporting their individual family values. Library staff does not monitor the materials children choose to check out. The responsibility for the reading and viewing choices of children rests with parents and legal guardians.

Washington County Library System is compliant with all County, State, and Federal laws governing Internet access. While every attempt is made to maintain authoritative links to Internet information, Washington County Library System does not have control over the World Wide Web and cannot be held responsible for the content, credibility, or accuracy of information retrieved from this source.

Washington County Library System and the Library Board of Directors endorse the provisions in the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the Freedom to View Statement, and the Statement on Labeling: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights as adopted by the American Library Association. These documents are attached as part of this policy.

Minors have access to all areas of the library at each branch of the Washington County Library System. The Library Board of Directors supports the Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights except where state or federal law supersedes the American Library Association interpretation. This document is attached as part of this policy. In compliance with the Federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) 114 Stat. 2763A-335, and the Utah Children's Internet Protection Act, §9-7-215 and §216, Utah Code Annotated, as amended the Washington County Library System has an Internet Policy in place as well as a technology protection measure and enforces the operation of the technology protection measure during any use of a computer by a minor.

VI. **Material Donations**

Upon receipt all donated materials become property of the Washington County Library System. When a donation is made the donor is given a *Donated Materials* form; included in this policy. In accepting gifts of materials the library reserves the privilege of deciding whether donated items will be added to the collection. Library staff receiving materials makes no judgment as to the value of donated materials. The public generously gives many books and other materials out of which a portion may be added to the collection and interfiled with other materials on the same subject and made available for check out. Some materials may be added to Special Collections and made available for use in the library only. Many material donations cannot be added to the

collection because the material may be; (1) a duplicate item of which the library already has a sufficient number; (2) outdated, (3) interesting but not of sufficient present reference or circulating value to the library; and/or (4) in poor condition, which would not justify the expense of processing the item, i.e. cataloging and preparing it for circulation. All donated material is evaluated by the same standards of selection as those applied to new materials purchased for the library.

VII. **Request for Reconsideration of Materials**

Washington County Library System welcomes interest in its collection. The Library Board of Directors recognizes that a library with a balanced collection may cause individuals to take issue with the selection of specific items.

When a library patron expresses concern about a library material the staff member receiving the complaint will: 1) attempt to resolve the problem, or 2) refer the patron to the Branch Manager or Library Director to resolve the problem. If the patron is not satisfied with the verbal or written response, the patron may complete a *Request for Reconsideration* form available at all library branches and included in this policy.

When a patron completes the *Request for Reconsideration* form they must return it to a Library Branch Manager or send it to the attention of the Library Director, Washington County Library System, 88 West 100 South, St. George, Utah 84770.

The Library's procedure for responding to concerns expressed by patrons is as follows:  
Patrons will be notified that the written statement has been received by the Library and The Library's Materials Selection Policy will be enclosed for the patron to review.  
A review process by the Library Administration will begin within ten working days of receipt of a written statement;  
While a concern is being considered, there will be no change in the status of the resource in question; and  
The Library Director will contact the patron upon completion of the review process.

The Library takes very seriously all concerns expressed by patrons and attempts to respond as quickly as possible. To ensure that all concerns are given careful consideration, the review process may take as long as six weeks.

If, at the end of the review process, the patron is not satisfied with the decision of the Library Director, he or she may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Directors by asking that the request for reconsideration be placed on the agenda of the Library Board of Directors Meeting. The Library Board of Directors has the final authority.

Adopted April 26, 2011  
Washington County Library Board of Directors

/s/ Sidney J. Atkin  
Library Board Chair

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council  
Amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; Inclusion  
of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

## **The Freedom to Read Statement**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing

them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one; the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.



This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee  
Amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

## **Freedom to View Statement**

The FREEDOM TO VIEW, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association).

Adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979.  
Updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.  
Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

## **Labeling and Rating Systems An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections or in resources accessible through the library. The presence of books and other resources in a library does not indicate endorsement of their contents by the library. Likewise, providing access to digital information does not indicate endorsement or approval of that information by the library. Labeling and rating systems present distinct challenges to these intellectual freedom principles.

Labels on library materials may be viewpoint-neutral directional aids designed to save the time of users, or they may be attempts to prejudice or discourage users or restrict their access to materials. When labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes, it is a censor's tool. The American Library Association opposes labeling as a means of predisposing people's attitudes toward library materials.

Prejudicial labels are designed to restrict access, based on a value judgment that the content, language, or themes of the material, or the background or views of the creator(s) of the material, render it inappropriate or offensive for all or certain groups of users. The prejudicial label is used to warn, discourage, or prohibit users or certain groups of users from accessing the material. Such labels sometimes are used to place materials in restricted locations where access depends on staff intervention.

Viewpoint-neutral directional aids facilitate access by making it easier for users to locate materials. The materials are housed on open shelves and are equally accessible to all users, who may choose to consult or ignore the directional aids at their own discretion.

Directional aids can have the effect of prejudicial labels when their implementation becomes proscriptive rather than descriptive. When directional aids are used to forbid access or to suggest moral or doctrinal endorsement, the effect is the same as prejudicial labeling.

Many organizations use rating systems as a means of advising either their members or the general public regarding the organizations' opinions of the contents and suitability or appropriate age for use of certain books, films, recordings, Web sites, games, or other materials. The adoption, enforcement, or endorsement of any of these rating systems by a library violates the Library Bill of Rights. When requested, librarians should provide information about rating systems equitably, regardless of viewpoint.

Adopting such systems into law or library policy may be unconstitutional. If labeling or rating systems are mandated by law, the library should seek legal advice regarding the law's applicability to library operations.

Libraries sometimes acquire resources that include ratings as part of their packaging. Librarians should not endorse the inclusion of such rating systems; however, removing or destroying the ratings—if placed there by, or with permission of, the copyright holder—could constitute expurgation (see “[Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights](#)”). In addition, the inclusion of ratings on bibliographic records in library catalogs is a violation of the Library Bill of Rights.

Prejudicial labeling and ratings presuppose the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is appropriate or inappropriate for others. They presuppose that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. The American Library Association affirms the rights of individuals to form their own opinions about resources they choose to read or view.

Adopted July 13, 1951, by the ALA Council  
Amended June 25, 1971; July 1, 1981; June 26, 1990; January 19, 2005; July 15, 2009.

## **Free Access to Libraries for Minors An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights**

Library policies and procedures that effectively deny minors equal and equitable access to all library resources and services available to other users violate the Library Bill of Rights. The American Library Association opposes all attempts to restrict access to library services, materials, and facilities based on the age of library users.

Article V of the Library Bill of Rights states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." The "right to use a library" includes free access to, and unrestricted use of, all the services, materials, and facilities the library has to offer. Every restriction on access to, and use of, library resources, based solely on the chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation of users violates Article V.

Libraries are charged with the mission of providing services and developing resources to meet the diverse information needs and interests of the communities they serve. Services, materials, and facilities that fulfill the needs and interests of library users at different stages in their personal development are a necessary part of library resources. The needs and interests of each library user, and resources appropriate to meet those needs and interests, must be determined on an individual basis. Librarians cannot predict what resources will best fulfill the needs and interests of any individual user based on a single criterion such as chronological age, educational level, literacy skills, or legal emancipation. Equitable access to all library resources and services shall not be abridged through restrictive scheduling or use policies.

Libraries should not limit the selection and development of library resources simply because minors will have access to them. Institutional self-censorship diminishes the credibility of the library in the community, and restricts access for all library users.

Children and young adults unquestionably possess First Amendment rights, including the right to receive information through the library in print, non-print, or digital format. Constitutionally protected speech cannot be suppressed solely to protect children or young adults from ideas or images a legislative body believes to be unsuitable for them.<sup>1</sup> Librarians and library governing bodies should not resort to age restrictions in an effort to avoid actual or anticipated objections, because only a court of law can determine whether material is not constitutionally protected.

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize librarians or library governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As *Libraries: An American Value* states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Librarians and library governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Librarians and governing bodies should maintain that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their children.

Lack of access to information can be harmful to minors. Librarians and library governing bodies have a public and professional obligation to ensure that all members of the community they serve have free, equal, and equitable access to the entire range of library resources regardless of content, approach, format, or amount of detail. This principle of library service applies equally to all users, minors as well as adults. Librarians and library governing bodies must uphold this principle in order to provide adequate and effective service to minors.

See also Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program and Access to Children and Young Adults to Non-print Materials.

1. See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205 (1975) "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them. In most circumstances, the values protected by the First Amendment are no less applicable when government seeks to control the flow of information to minors." See also *Tinker v. Des Moines School Dist.*, 393 U.S.503 (1969); *West Virginia Bd. of Ed. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624 (1943); *AAMA v. Kendrick*,. 244 F.3d 572 (7th Cir. 2001).

Adopted June 30, 1972, by the ALA Council  
Amended July 1, 1981; July 3, 1991; June 30, 2004; July 2, 2008.